also inhibits any such development because it forces the immediate distribution of most of the meat of the slaughtered pig or captured game. There is no constantly or repeatedly stored supply to be supervised or allocated. In fact swine and windfall game, properly considered, correspond to the small oscillations of the manioc supply and are totally different from the regularly occurring massive incidence of food sources like buffalo herds, salmon runs, and wheat harvests of temperate climates or crab runs in the tropical Orinoco delta of Venezuela.[21]. Of all the food resources, the only one with a marked harvest surplus is corn. The significance of even this harvest surplus is reduced by a) the smallness of the quanta involved relative to the total food supply, and b) the fact that there are two corn seasons, one beginning in June, one about the beginning of February. Temporary harvest surpluses of corn may, however, contribute slightly to the enhanced prestige of those individuals who by their own will and work have been most productive.[22] They say with appreciation, "He is a hard worker", but the prestige is relevant only to the sphere in which it is gained. It does not necessarily give him prestige in some other spheres of cultural life, such as, for example, the ceremonial or decision-making activities.

In taking an overall view of the food resources, it will be noted that there are no clear harvest surpluses, and that the oscillations in supply, which are in truth minute and momentary harvest surpluses, are so small and irregular and varied in location as to be insignificant determiners of managerial functions. At most one might expect the harvest surplus of corn to elicit some small allocative function, generally none. Storage, too, in this case, is not a technique requiring administration as with wheat in grain elevators. It would in fact be better to consider this kind of storage as a steady presence of food rather than as storage at all, even though it functions as such.

The extra labor requirements of these small upward oscillations of the harvest surplus are likewise, in general, indistinguishable from regular labor requirements and are easily absorbed by individual workers. Or a worker may take along a child, who goes as much for the fun of being with his father or grandfather, but nevertheless carries back some produce. This type of situation is in sharp contrast with, say, the labor requirements of a large harvest surplus like the wheat crop in the United States which demands a large amount of labor quickly and temporarily. Such a harvest surplus entails a number of organizational problems foreign to the harvest oscillations.

---

[21] Personal communication from Johannes Wilbert who has done extensive fieldwork with the Warrau in the Amacuro Delta of the Orinoco River.

[22] Yaruro individuals differ in productivity not only because of inborn qualities such as strength and native abilities, but also by choice based on tastes. Some do not like to grow corn, others do not like to grow pigs, others still prefer to hunt or trade. The food quanta produced by these several activities vary greatly. The individual may exercise these choices in a cultural setting where any such choice benefits the community. All produce eventually finds its way into the community at large through the distribution mechanism. The person is not acting as an individualist regardless of the interest of others, but at his own optimum, given his unique person, in the community as a whole. Cf Fn 9 *supra*.